

WHAT WE CLAIM IS

1. A clear, high oil loaded, thermodynamically stable oil-in-water microemulsion
5 comprising :
 - a) at least 30% of oil ;
 - b) from 1 to 30% of a surfactant system having a hydrophilic lipophilic balance, HLB, comprised between 9 and 18 ;
 - c) less than 20% of co-solvent ; and
 - 10 d) at least 30% of water.
2. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the weight ratio between the surfactant system and the co-solvent is of 1 to 1.
- 15 3. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the oil phase comprises an oil-soluble antioxidant.
4. A microemulsion according to claim 3, wherein the oil-soluble antioxidant is tocopherol.
- 20 5. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the oil is selected from the group consisting of lemon, berry, lime, orange, grapefruit, tangerine, mandarin, kumquat and bergamot oil, and any mixture thereof.
- 25 6. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the surfactant system comprises at least one surfactant selected from the group consisting of Tween[®] 20, Tween[®] 40, Tween[®] 60, Tween[®] 80, Glycosperse[®] L-20, Glycosperse[®] O-20, Glycosperse[®] S-20, Polyaldo[®] 10-1-O K, Polyaldo[®] 10-2-O K, Glycosperse[®] TS-20, Lonzest[®] SMO-20, Span[®] 20 and Span[®] 40.

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7. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the co-solvent is an alcohol selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, ethanol, mono- and di-saccharide sugars and sugar alcohols.
- 5 8. A microemulsion according to claim 7, wherein the sugar alcohol is selected from the group consisting of sorbitol, xylitol and mannitol.
9. A microemulsion according to claim 7, wherein the alcohol is propylene glycol.
- 10 10. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the surfactant system has a lipophilic hydrophilic balance comprised between 12 and 15.
11. A clear beverage comprising a microemulsion according to claim 1.
- 15 12. A clear beverage according to claim 11, comprising an antioxidant.
13. A method for imparting, improving, enhancing or modifying the organoleptic properties of a flavoring composition or a flavored product, wherein a microemulsion according to claim 1 is added to said composition or product as a flavor carrier.
- 20 14. A method according to claim 13, wherein the flavored product is a clear beverage.
15. A process for the preparation of a microemulsion according to claim 1, comprising the steps of
- 25 a) preparing a continuous phase consisting of water and co-solvent ;
- b) adding a primary surfactant to get a clear surfactant/water phase dispersion ;
- c) adding an oil phase, to form a milky dispersion ;
- d) titrating said dispersion with a co-surfactant to convert it into a clear
- 30 microemulsion.